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REMARKS

The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the subject application and indication that claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7-17 are in a condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration of the subject application based on the instant amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-17 are pending in the instant application. Claim 6 and the specification at page 9 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendments to the specification or claims. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification. Sec, for example, Example 3, which provides for addition of hydrogen peroxide (35% in water, 10 g) to nitric acid (50% in water, 360g). No new matter has been introduced into the application.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6, as amended, provides that "the oxidant is added in a ratio of 0-5% relative to nitric acid by weight." Claim 6, as amended is fully compliant with 35 U.S.C. §112 including the requirements of §112, second paragraph.

The disclosure of the specification has been objected to for the following informalities:
"the phrase 'are in a ratio of 0-5%' is recited in line 16 on page 9."

The specification has been amended at line 16 of page 9 to clarify the objected to language. Support for the amendment to the specification can be found in Example 3 which provides that hydrogen peroxide is added as an additional oxidant in a ratio of between 0-5%

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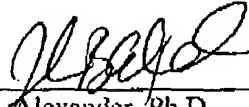
relative to nitric acid, e.g., the ratio of hydrogen peroxide (35% in water, 10 g) to nitric acid (50% in water, 360g) is less than 5% by weight.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance.
Applicants request reconsideration of the claims and withdrawal of the rejections.

Applicants believe that additional fees are not required for consideration of the within Response. However, if for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, you are hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

Respectfully submitted,

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